TUITION on all Fretted Instruments is given at 54/55 Piccadilly London, W.1

PICKINGS

PICKINGS is posted free of charge to any address on request. Ask other players to write to us!

ISSUED FOR BANJO, MANDOLIN AND GUITAR ENTHUSIASTS

No. 21. AUGUST, SEPTEMBER. 1937.

PLAYING IN TUNE.

By EMILE GRIMSHAW.

Many years ago, when I spent almost all the spare time I had at my disposal in the study of music, I remember reading in a book of instruction (and at that time believing) that good tone production was of far greater importance than executive ability, reading facility or anything else that one is expected to learn when commencing the study of a musical instrument.

Although the ability to produce good and pleasing tone is an undoubted asset to any musician—and his listeners—there is to my mind something that is of much greater importance, and that is: ability to play in tune.

I am not sure that the art of playing in tune is a thing that can be imparted to others. It seems to be that we all either have a natural ability to do this or we haven't. One person will play, sing or whistle in perfect pitch without having had any musical training, while on the other hand, others who are possibly good musicians in all other ways, will play or sing out of tune and be quite unaware that they are doing so.

One cannot appreciate good tone unless it is also true to pitch. Players of the banjo, mandolin and guitar cannot go far wrong, because they have the advantage of their instruments being fretted; but even these instruments must be tuned correctly and the strings and fretting must be true. If a player has a good sense of musical pitch, he will naturally tune correctly and reject any strings that are false. Any discrepancy will be noticed and rectified immediately. If on the other hand, a player has not an accurate enough ear to discern a discrepancy, it is very difficult to offer any explanation that would enable him to find it out.

When I listen to music, I appreciate first of all intonation, or in other words, the ability to sing or play in tune. Secondly comes expression—the art of making a piece of music mean something. I also appreciate rhythm, execution and all the other musical acquisites, but they must mean something—and be in tune.

How do you Judge a Banjo?

TONE?

E.G. Banjos have real characteristic banjo tone: Full, Rich, Snappy and Irresistable.

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All E.G. Banjos are true at every fret.

EASY PLAYING?

The necks of E.G. Banjos are specially constructed for easy fingering of chords. All nuts are properly notched and the strings are correctly spaced.

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E.G. Banjos are made by skilled craftsmen and are thoroughly guaranteed.

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E.G. "MINOR" BANJO	5	Guineas
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E.G. "VIVAVOX" The Worlds Finest ZITHER BANJO	25	,,
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EMILE GRIMSHAW & SON, 54/55 Piccadilly, London, W 1.

STRING WISDOM.

As wire strings invariably break at the peg, nut, bridge or tailpiece, it is a good idea, before removing the broken string, to ascertain exactly where the breakage has occurred. Should the breakage occur always at the same place and frequently, the instrument may have some slight fault that can be readily adjusted.

If a string breaks repeatedly at the peg, there may be a sharp edge at the hole through which the string passes. The remedy is to remove this cutting edge by rubbing with a small rounded file.

Should breakages occur at the nut or bridge, the grooves may possibly be too small and thus cause the strings, through being held too tightly, to snap when vibrated. It is important that grooves or slots in the nut and bridge should be of the right size to fit the particular strings for which they are intended. When an instrument is tuned, the strings must move easily through the slots of the nut, otherwise the strings may break whilst tuning because the short length behind the nut will be tightened unduly without any appreciable difference being made to the pitch of the sounding portion of the strings. A minute particle of vaseline placed in the grooves, will assist the string to move readily either way.

It is important that players should use the correct gauge of string. If too thin, there will be a lack of tone and the strings will have a tendency to jingle. If, on the other hand the strings are too thick, the tone will be dull and unresponsive. Guitar covered strings must be closely and tightly wound or the resultant tone will be extremely dull. If the outer covering of a plectrum guitar wound string can be made to slide a quarter of an inch or more over its interior wire, the string is useless, and should be immediately replaced.

Third and fourth banjo strings are usually made too thin, the consequence being that they do not offer sufficient resistance either to the right-hand thumb or plectrum. Finger-style players who like a gut third should try the "Rubygut," which is moisture proof, and supplied in a slightly thicker gauge than is customary. Plectrum banjoists should avail themselves of the "Silkamin" third and the new "Monasilk" fourth. All players will probably be interested in the complete list of correct gauge high quality strings which appears on the back page of this issue of "Pickings."

* * * *

JOTTINGS.

Mr. J. G. Powell of Derby, plays a G.5 "Revelation" in Tommy Arnold's Band. Immediately after a recent broadcast, the latter received many letters congratulating him on the splendid tone that was produced by the guitarist.

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TWO INEXPENSIVE

"VIVAVOX"

ZITHER-BANJOS

RICH. RESONANT
IRRESISTABLE TONE.
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Other Vivavox Models at 16 and 25 Guineas.

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54-55 PICCADILLY, LONDON, W.1.

An effort is being made by Messrs. Mancini and J. H. Scrutton to form a club for mandolinists and guitarists in the Willesden district of London. Players who would like to join are requested to forward their names and addresses to Mr. Scrutton, at 71, Townsend Lane, Kingsbury, N.W.9.

This year's Southern B.M. & G. Rally will be held at the Memorial Hall, Farringdon Street, E.C.4. The Test Pieces for bands will be "Show Boat" for Division 1, and "Rally Overture" for Division 2. Test Pieces for all other contests are left to the choice of the competitors, but must have been published for the instruments on which they are played.

The Northern Section of the Federation will hold this year's gathering at the Tower Blackpool on the last Sunday in September. Entrance forms for all contests are now ready, and can be obtained from the Secretary: Mr. Wm. Linley, 3, Spencer Street, Reddish, Stockport.

Mr. Reg Oswald of Shanklin, Isle of Wight, informs us that Mario de Pietro's mandolin solos are a big success at the Summer Theatre in this town. Mr. Oswald plays a "Revelation" guitar in the Flying Club Rhythm Band. He also says the other members in the band are amazed with the enormous volume of his instrument.

Mr. E. Cator of 8, Old Palace Road, Weybridge, Surrey, teaches the banjo and guitar in this district. We highly recommend him to anyone who wishes to have lessons on either of these instruments.

A guitar club has been formed at Hornsey. At present there are about a dozen members, and meetings are held at the Great Northern Hotel, High Street, Hornsey, every Wednesday at 8 p.m. The repertoire at present includes "Show Boat," "Spick and Spanish," "Vodka" and "Parlez moi d'Amour." Guitarists who would like to join this club should apply to Mr. W. Baron, at 140, North View Road, Hornsey, N.

There has recently been a big increase in the membership of the West Herts. B.M. & G. Club. Rehearsals are held on alternate Monday evenings at 8 p.m., at the Red Lion Hotel, Bushey. Applications for membership should be made to Mr. W. Bignell, 236, Watford Road, Croxley Green, Watford, Herts.

Mr. A. Dargue of Layton, Blackpool, is doing good work on behalf of the fretted instruments in Blackpool. His daughter, with a "Revelation" Hawaiian guitar, came second place at the 1936 Federation Hawaiian Guitar Contest.

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"South Sea Islands." (*Waltz.*)
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"Old Remembrance." (*Waltz.*)
"Dance of the Fireflies."
"Isles of Beauty."
"The Gay Gondoliers." (*March.*)
"Peerless Hawaiian March."
"Pacific Paradise."
"Castillion Serenade."
"Hawaiian Sunshine." (*Waltz.*)

For PLECTRUM GUITAR

"Island Echoes March."
"Marvel March."
"Among The Roses." (*Waltz.*)
"One, Two, Three, Four."
"Prairie Medley."
"Paradise Bay." (*Waltz.*)
"Lucky Break." (*By Wm. Morris.*)
"Fascination Glide."
"Spring Blossoms."

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E.G. adjustable wrist-rest for banjo	3/-
Polished aluminium finger-plate for banjo ...	8/6
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E.G. Superex Vellum, 11 inch stretched ...	12/6
E.G. Superex Vellum, 14 inch unstretched ...	10/-
Non-tip Banjo Bridge ½ or ⅝ inch high	1/-

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MR. ATTAH E. ASARE, of the Gold Coast, West Africa, is an enthusiastic player of a G.4 "REVELATION" GUITAR.

QUERIES ANSWERED.

Fretted instrument queries are requested and answered by return post if a stamped, addressed envelope is enclosed. We give below a selection from the replies that have been sent to correspondents since "Pickings" was last issued, believing that they will be of interest to other players.

S.B.—The correct finger-board marking for the banjo is at the 5th, 7th, 10th and 12th frets. In the still higher positions: 14th, 17th and 20th frets. The pearl inlay markings for the guitar are at the 5th, 7th, 9th and 12th frets. These indicate important positions, and are valuable aids in reaching the correct positions with facility and rapidity.

R.G.—When a fretted instrument is tuned note by note to a piano, it will very likely be found to be not quite in tune with itself—the unisons may not come out accurately. This, of course, is one of the vagaries of the tempered scale, the peculiarities of which would take too long to explain here. When the open strings have been tuned as correctly as possible, play a few simple chords and then slightly adjust (or temper) the tuning to your liking.

D.R.—To clean a banjo vellum, remove the strings and tailpiece; slacken all the brackets to remove all strain on the vellum: then saturate a piece of clean white rag with benzine and rub quickly the soiled parts. Use the benzine sparingly, and change frequently the portion of cloth used for cleaning. Put the banjo aside for an hour or two, then tighten the vellum and replace the strings.

A.F.—The Milanese mandolin, popular in the north of Italy, has six single strings, three of these are gut and the lower three are silk wrapped with fine copper wire.

D.E.W.—When playing the guitar finger-style, chords should be sounded arpeggio from the lowest note to the highest, and the speed of the arpeggio should be regulated in accordance with the style of composition that is played. Keep the thumb of your right hand well in advance of the fingers, and see that the fingers move towards the palm of the hand after vibrating the strings.

* * * *

HOW TO SUCCEED AS A TEACHER OF BANJO, MANDOLIN OR GUITAR.

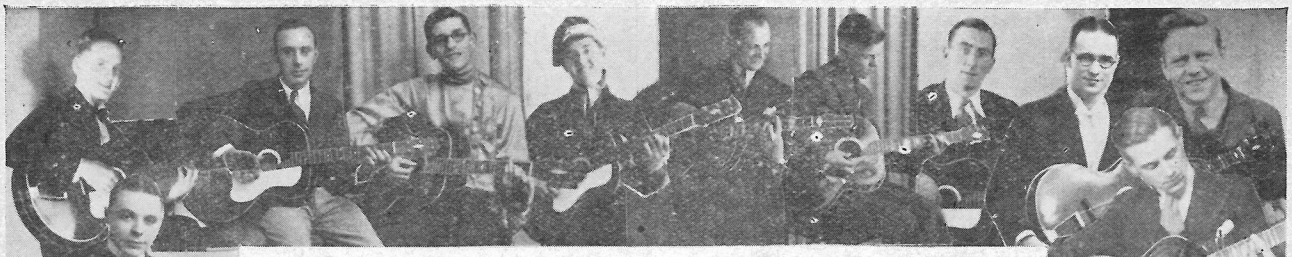
There are comparitively few banjo, mandolin and guitar teachers who can be assured of having a sufficiently large number of pupils that will justify their making the giving of lessons a full time occupation. This is why the great majority of teachers find it advantageous to instruct others in their spare time. This does not mean that these teachers are less competent. This class of teacher is doing splendid work on behalf of our instruments. In addition to teaching, they frequently appear publicly as soloists; some of them broadcast frequently, and many have organised very successful B.M. & G. Clubs.

As many capable and enthusiastic fretted instrument players are usually very diffident when a suggestion is made to them that they should teach others, the following suggestions may prove helpful.

It is advisable that a teacher of a banjo, mandolin or guitar should know all he can about his favourite instrument and at least a little about most other musical instruments in order that he may have a reasonable idea of the advantages and limitations of the one he intends to teach. He must, of course, understand musical theory, and he will probably find that the more he teaches the more will his knowledge of theory and harmony increase. Inquisitive pupils never know how enormously they improve the musical knowledge of their teachers.

The teacher should be a good performer on at least one of the fretted instruments he professes to teach, and should play for others publicly or privately as much as possible.

When he has several pupils sufficiently far advanced, it is advisable to form a quartet or small orchestra. This is not only the best possible incentive for maintaining and creating interest, but



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ADD a patented RESONATOR BACK which gives TWICE THE VOLUME with HALF THE EFFORT and you will realise why WISE PLAYERS buy

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16 guineas or 12 monthly instalments of £1–10–10.

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"REVELATION" De Luxe Guitar

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including three-ply brown crocodile leatherette case

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The E.G.

"REVELATION" G.5 Guitar

in plush lined case

36 guineas or 12 monthly instalments of £3–9–4.

Smaller instalments can be arranged over a period of 18 months if desired.

it will also be found the best and cheapest way in which to advertise the instruments and make non-players appreciative and fretted-instrument minded. All young clubs should start off with a repertoire of easy tuneful numbers with a good sprinkling of tunes that audiences will probably know, such as "Community Medley," "Scotch Broth," "Medley of Leslie Stuart's Songs," "Sousa Scrap Book," "Show Boat" and others. When the little band is proficient, their services should be offered to local church or school concert organisers free of charge.

Every player of a banjo, mandolin or guitar, and particularly every teacher, should spare no effort to impress non-players with the fact that there is real entertainment and deep satisfaction to be obtained from these instruments. Let the non-players hear the type of music that suits the instrument on which it is played; assure them of the worth-while results that can be obtained in a short time; play them some tunes they know; demonstrate how admirable is a banjo or guitar for providing the accompaniment to a song. This is the way to interest non-players and create a desire to learn.

Emile Grimshaw & Son do an enormous amount of business with teachers, and will greatly appreciate hearing from prospective teachers to whom will be sent free of charge further information that will probably prove interesting and helpful.

* * * *

MAINLY FOR MANDOLINISTS.

Make certain that you always strike both strings of a pair.

Good tremolo depends on smoothness rather than rapidity. Let your plectrum skim the surface of the strings and your sustained tremolo effects will be smoother.

In addition to the practising of single-note scales, practise scales in intervals of sixths. For the latter, the keys of G and F major are good for beginners.

Don't play too close to the bridge. A pleasing *dolce* effect is obtainable about the middle of the sounding length of a string.

Practise position playing so that you can make effective use of the slide, and keep your melody on a single string whenever this is advantageous during the rendition of a solo.

The covered strings of a mandolin will, after they have been stretched on the instrument for a time, gradually loose their elasticity and consequently deteriorate in tone. Don't, therefore, wait until they break before replacing them if you want your instrument to give maximum results.

Keep the wrists of both hands arched, and as loose as possible.

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Incomparable for Value, Tone and Volume

"HARTFORD" 5 — 5 Guineas complete in case

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The HARTFORD and HARTFORD 12 GUITARS
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with wider fingerboard flat nut and bridge and a specially designed body to give Resonance and lasting tone.

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Including: Prelude (Lohengrin), Pilgrims Chorus (Tannhauser), Light Cavalry (Suppe), "Maritana" (Wallace) and William Tell (Rosini).
1st and 2nd Guitars **1/-** Piano **1/-**

LILY OF LUGANA, I MAY BE CRAZY, SHADE OF THE PALM and SOLDIERS OF THE KING
are included in the popular plectrum guitar solo:
Medley of Leslie Stuart's Songs.
Tunes you will never tire of playing
Plectrum Guitar Solo **1/-** 2nd Guitar **6d.** Piano **1/-**

OL' MAN RIVER, MAKE BELIEVE, WHY DO I LOVE YOU, YOU ARE LOVE and CAN'T HELP LOVIN' DAT MAN
are the immensely popular tunes in the plectrum guitar solo:
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Solo and 2nd Guitars **1/6** Piano **1/-**

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HAWAIIAN GUITAR in case ...	2	0	0
GIBSON GUITAR, £4-19-6 Kalamazoo in case	3	0	0
RELIANCE GUITAR, cello model, *f* sound holes, pearl fingerplate and case	3	3	0
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RADIOTONE GUITAR, cost £6-15 in case ..	4	15	0
C.E. "PARAGON" GUITAR in case, cost 15 gns New condition ...	5	0	0
HARTFORD DE LUXE 12 Gn. GUITAR. Discontinued model, in case	5	10	0
"HARTFORD" late model GUITAR, with case	6	0	0
MARTIN COLLETTI GUITAR, cost 10 gns in case, new condition	6	6	0
PLECTRUM GUITAR, sunburst finish, white binding round body, with case	6	6	0
BOOSEY-HAWKES GUITAR, E.G. Junior, £20 Model, in case ...	8	8	0
GIBSON GUITAR, 11 guinea Kalamazoo model with case, Sunburst finish, late model, almost new condition	8	8	0
GIBSON L 4 GUITAR cost £29 in case	11	11	0
E.G. "REVELATION" GUITAR, 16 guinea model, with case ...	11	11	0
E.G. "REVELATION" GUITAR, 24 guinea model, with case ...	13	13	0
REVELATION G.4. GUITAR, taken as part exchange for G.5. REVELATION. All the latest improvements. case included. Cost 28 gns.	18	18	0
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WINDSOR ZITHER-BANJO in case Cost 8 gns. New condition	4	4	0
E.G MINOR BANJOLIN, in case Excellent conditions	4	10	0
LUTE Scroll pattern head; bowl shape body; six strings; played as a Guitar	2	2	0
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WINDSOR TENOR-BANJO in case	3	3	0
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PANORMA GUITAR. Genuine with label, wonderful tone	8	8	0
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PRATTEN GUITAR, Label signed by Mme. Pratten, 1880. Perfect condition	8	8	0
A LARGE SELECTION of FRENCH, SPANISH and other GUITARS specially made for finger-style playing, from	2	10	0
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FOLDING GUITAR STANDS, several tarnished, half-price, each	0	6	9

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THAT PUT NEW LIFE INTO YOUR INSTRUMENT.

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BANJO STRINGS

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RUBYGUT	... A specially tested string of RED gut treated with a moisture-repelling preparation that increases its durability — 1st or 5th		6d	6/-
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	3rd wire and silk compound, covered with a special hard wire alloy	....	6d.	6/-
	4th ,, ,, ,, ,,	....	7d.	7/-

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PLECTRUM GUITAR STRINGS

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	Best quality Steel covered with a special hard wire alloy	3rd	....	7d.	7/-
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		5th	....	9d.	9/-
		6th	....	10d.	10/-

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for finger-style playing

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SILVATONE	.... Pure Silk covered with fine wire — 4th	....	8d.	8/-
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SILVATONE	....Best quality Steel — 1st or 2nd	....	4d.	3/6
	,, ,, ,, — 3rd	....	6d.	5/-
	Hand Burnished to prevent whistling effects when sliding — covered 3rd		8d.	8/-
	,, 4th		9d.	9/-
	,, 5th		10d.	10/-
	,, 6th		1/-	12/-

UKULELE STRINGS

		Each	Per set
RUBYGUT	...1st, 2nd, 3rd, or 4th	6d.	2/-

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